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LB 787, 1003

and if you've gotten your handout you'll see that, Section 9 increases the park entry permit from \$14 to \$17 on January 1, 2003; to \$18 on January 1, 2004; \$19 on January 1, 2005; and \$20 on January 1, 2006, and subsequent years. You'll see on this chart I passed out that there are 38 states that charge a fee for park entry fees. There's only one state lower than Nebraska and I believe that is Arkansas, if I checked correctly. The other 12 states that don't charge fund their parks from other sources besides park entry fee. There are 86 areas, or park or recreation areas, in the state and only 1 of them makes money and that is Mahoney State Park. A couple come close to breaking even, but most of them, especially the historical parks, are...lose money. The Game and Parks presently is about 70 percent cash funded, that (inaudible) permits from lodging fees, hunting and fishing, and 30 percent General Fund. Before the park entry fee was adopted in 1979, it was just the opposite way around. Thirty percent was cash funded and 70 percent was General Fund. So that is probably the main thrust of the bill, is the increase in the park entry fees, and, of course, with the budget situation the way it is, and I'm sure their General Fund is going to be reduced, a park entry fee becomes more and more an important source of revenue for Game and Parks. Section 10 allows the commission to sell park entry permits from its web site and collect a dollar for clerical work and postage associating...associated with issuing the permit. Section 11 changes the current buddy hunting application to allow up to five individuals to apply for a permit together to allow them to be considered one party so they can be issued permits in the same unit. Before this bill, it was only two people could apply in the same unit. Section 12 is amended to (sic--by) LB 787, which advanced during the last legislative session by unanimous vote of the Natural Resources Committee. Section 12 allows limited hunting permits for deer, antelope, and wild turkey and elk to be given to persons who are qualifying landowners or lease owners and their immediate family, which is defined as husband, wife or children. The reason for this is we find some people playing games with this landowner's permit. They may say, well, my uncle leased me this land so I get a landowner's permit, and really they're not involved in agriculture, they're not involved in the farming operation. And there's been some abuse of this and so we feel that the people in situations like